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Agenda item 20 (a)
**Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development**

**Draft resolution submitted by the President of the General Assembly**

# Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development

*The General Assembly*,

*Recalling* its resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012, by which it endorsed the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want",

*Emphasizing* the need for an improved and more effective institutional framework for sustainable development, which should be guided by the specific functions required and mandates involved, address the shortcomings of the current system, take into account all relevant implications, promote synergies and coherence, seek to avoid duplication and eliminate unnecessary overlaps within the United Nations system and reduce administrative burdens and build on existing arrangements,

*Recalling* the decision contained in paragraph 84 of the outcome document of the Conference[1] to establish a universal intergovernmental high-level political forum, building on the strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which would subsequently replace the Commission, as well as the decision that the high-level political forum should follow on the implementation of sustainable development and should avoid overlap with existing structures, bodies and entities in a cost-effective manner,

*Reaffirming* the role and authority of the General Assembly on global matters of concern to the international community, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations, and its central position as the chief deliberative, policymaking and

[1] Resolution 66/288, annex.



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representative organ of the United Nations, and recognizing the need for it to further integrate sustainable development as a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities,

*Reaffirming also* the commitment to strengthen the Economic and Social Council, within its mandate under the Charter, as a principal organ in the integrated and coordinated follow-up of the outcomes of all major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, and recognizing the key role of the Council in achieving the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development,

*Recalling* the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[2] Agenda 21,[3] the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,[4] the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation)[5] and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,[6]

*Recalling also* the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados Programme of Action)[7] and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[8]

*Recalling further* the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action),[9] the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries,[10] the political declaration on Africa's development needs[11] and the New Partnership for Africa's Development,[12]

*Recalling* the commitments in the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields,

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[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] Resolution S-19/2, annex.

[5] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), resolution 2, annex.

[6] Ibid., chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[7] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[8] *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap I, resolution 1, annex II.

[9] *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chap. I.

[10] *Report of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Cooperation, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 28 and 29 August 2003* (A/CONF.202/3), annex I.

[11] Resolution 63/1.

[12] A/57/304, annex.

including the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[13] the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[14] the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,[15] the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development:[16] outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals,[17] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[18] the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[19] and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[20]

*Recalling also* its resolution 67/203 of 21 December 2012,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the lessons learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development;[21]

2. *Decides* that the high-level political forum, consistent with its universal intergovernmental character, shall provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations for sustainable development, follow up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments, enhance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner at all levels and have a focused, dynamic and action-oriented agenda, ensuring the appropriate consideration of new and emerging sustainable development challenges;

3. *Also decides* that the meetings of the forum will be convened under the auspices of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council;

4. *Further decides* that all meetings of the forum will provide for the full and effective participation of all Member States of the United Nations and States members of specialized agencies;

5. *Decides* that, in all meetings of the forum, every effort shall be made to reach consensus;

6. *Also decides* that the meetings of the forum under the auspices of the General Assembly:

(a) Will be convened at the level of Heads of State and Government;

(b) Will be convened every four years by the President of the General Assembly for a period of two days, at the beginning of the Assembly session, as

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[13] Resolution 55/2.

[14] Resolution 60/1.

[15] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[16] Resolution 63/239, annex.

[17] Resolution 65/1.

[18] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. 1, resolution 1, annex.

[19] Resolution S-21/1, annex.

[20] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[21] A/67/757.

well as on other occasions, on an exceptional basis, upon a decision by the Assembly;

(c) Will be chaired by the President of the Assembly;

(d) Will result in a concise negotiated political declaration to be submitted for the consideration of the Assembly;

7. *Further decides* that the meetings of the forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council:

(a) Will be convened annually by the President of the Council for a period of eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment to be held in the framework of the substantive session of the Council, building on and subsequently replacing the annual ministerial review as from 2016;

(b) Will be chaired by the President of the Council;

(c) Will have a thematic focus reflecting the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, in line with the thematic focus of the activities of the Council and consistent with the post-2015 development agenda;

(d) Will follow up and review progress in the implementation of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields, as well as their respective means of implementation, improve cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system on sustainable development programmes and policies, promote the sharing of best practices and experiences relating to the implementation of sustainable development and, on a voluntary basis, facilitate sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, and promote system-wide coherence and coordination of sustainable development policies;

(e) Will take into account the work of the Development Cooperation Forum, as well as other activities of the Economic and Social Council relating to the integration and implementation of sustainable development;

(f) Will benefit from regional preparatory processes;

(g) Will result in a negotiated ministerial declaration for inclusion in the report of the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly;

8. *Decides* that the forum, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, will conduct regular reviews, starting in 2016, on the follow-up and implementation of sustainable development commitments and objectives, including those related to the means of implementation, within the context of the post-2015 development agenda, and further decides that those reviews:

(a) Will be voluntary, while encouraging reporting, and will include developed and developing countries, as well as relevant United Nations entities;

(b) Will be State-led, involving ministerial and other relevant high-level participants;

(c) Will provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders;

(d) Will replace the national voluntary presentations held in the context of the annual ministerial-level substantive reviews of the Economic and Social

Council, building upon the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 61/16 as well as experiences and lessons learned in this context;

9. *Also decides* that all meetings convened under the auspices of the General Assembly will operate under the rules of procedure of the main committees of the Assembly, as applicable, unless otherwise provided in the present resolution, and that all meetings convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council will operate under the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Council, as applicable, except as otherwise provided in the present resolution;

10. *Underlines* that the arrangement established by the Economic and Social Council for the Commission on Sustainable Development in Council decision 1995/201 of 8 February 1995 will apply to the meetings of the forum held under the auspices of the Council, and that the arrangements established by the General Assembly in the annex to its resolution 65/276 of 3 May 2011 will apply to the meetings of the forum held under the auspices of the Assembly;

11. *Decides* that the meetings of the forum will devote adequate time to discussion of the sustainable development challenges facing developing countries, including the most vulnerable countries, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States, landlocked developing countries and countries in Africa, with the aim of enhancing engagement and implementing commitments and that they will recognize the particular challenges faced by the middle-income countries in achieving sustainable development, and reiterates that their efforts should be adequately supported by the international community in various forms, taking into account the needs of those countries and their capacity to mobilize domestic resources;

12. *Encourages* States to ensure that their participation in the meetings of the forum reflect the balanced integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development from their national perspectives;

13. *Acknowledges* the importance of the regional dimension of sustainable development, and invites the United Nations regional commissions to contribute to the work of the forum, including through annual regional meetings, with the involvement of other relevant regional entities, major groups and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate;

14. *Stresses* the need for the forum to promote transparency and implementation by further enhancing the consultative role and participation of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders at the international level in order to make better use of their expertise, while retaining the intergovernmental nature of discussions, and in this regard decides that the forum will be open to the major groups, other relevant stakeholders and entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the General Assembly, building on arrangements and practices observed by the Commission on Sustainable Development, including Economic and Social Council decision 1993/215 of 12 February 1993 and Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, which will be applicable to the forum;

15. *Decides*, in this regard, that, while retaining the intergovernmental character of the forum, the representatives of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders will be allowed:

(a) To attend all official meetings of the forum;

(b) To have access to all official information and documents;

(c) To intervene in official meetings;

(d) To submit documents and present written and oral contributions;

(e) To make recommendations;

(f) To organize side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat of the United Nations;

16. *Encourages* the major groups identified in Agenda 21[3] and other stakeholders, such as private philanthropic organizations, educational and academic entities, persons with disabilities, volunteer groups and other stakeholders active in areas related to sustainable development, to autonomously establish and maintain effective coordination mechanisms for participation in the high-level political forum and for actions derived from that participation at the global, regional and national levels, in a way that ensures effective, broad and balanced participation by region and by type of organization;

17. *Invites* the organizations of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions and other relevant intergovernmental organizations, including the World Trade Organization, to contribute within their respective mandates to the discussions of the forum;

18. *Emphasizes* that the forum shall provide a dynamic platform for regular dialogue and for stocktaking and agenda-setting to advance sustainable development and that the agenda of all meetings of the high-level political forum will be focused, while allowing flexibility to address new and emerging issues;

19. *Reaffirms* that the forum shall contribute to the enhanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner at all levels, and in this regard invites the forum to take into account the contributions and work of relevant United Nations intergovernmental bodies in the social, economic and environmental fields;

20. *Decides* that the forum will strengthen the science-policy interface by examining documentation, bringing together dispersed information and assessments, including in the form of a global sustainable development report, building on existing assessments, enhancing evidence-based decision-making at all levels and contributing to the strengthening of ongoing capacity-building for data collection and analysis in developing countries, and requests the forum to consider, in 2014, the scope and methodology of a global sustainable development report, based on a proposal of the Secretary-General, reflecting the views and recommendations of Member States, and relevant United Nations entities, including the Committee for Development Policy;

21. *Also decides* that the forum can provide recommendations to the board of the 10-year framework of programmes for sustainable consumption and production, as well as to the United Nations Environment Programme, as the secretariat of the 10-year framework, taking into account their reports;

22. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council to coordinate with the Bureau of the Council and with the bureaux of the relevant committees of the General Assembly to organize the

activities of the forum so as to benefit from the inputs and advice of the United Nations system, the major groups and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate;

23. *Decides* that the forum will be supported by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in close cooperation with all relevant entities of the United Nations system, including funds and programmes, multilateral financial and trade institutions, the secretariats of the three Rio conventions and other relevant treaty bodies and international organizations within their respective mandates;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to carry over all the remaining funds from the Trust Fund for Support of the Work of the Commission on Sustainable Development to a voluntary trust fund of the forum in order to facilitate the participation of developing countries, the least developed countries, representatives of major groups and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, in the work of the forum and to support the preparations of the forum, and in this regard invites Member States, financial institutions and other organizations to contribute to the voluntary trust fund of the forum;

25. *Decides* that travel expenses for one representative of each of the least developed countries will be paid from the United Nations regular budget for participation in all formal meetings of the forum;

26. *Recommends* that the Economic and Social Council abolish the Commission on Sustainable Development effective upon the conclusion of its twentieth session, to be held prior to the first meeting of the forum, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/203 of 21 December 2012;

27. *Decides* that the first meeting of the forum under the auspices of the General Assembly will have an inaugural character, requests the President of the Assembly to convene the meeting at the beginning of the sixty-eighth session for the duration of one day, and decides that, on an extraordinary basis and only for the purpose of that meeting, the outcome of the meeting will consist of the President's summary;

28. *Also decides* to consider at its sixty-ninth session the need to convene a meeting of the forum under the auspices of the General Assembly in 2015 in relation to the launch of the post-2015 development agenda;

29. *Decides* to review the format and the organizational aspects of the forum at its seventy-third session, unless otherwise decided;

30. *Emphasizes* that the review of General Assembly resolution 61/16 should take into account the present resolution in order to avoid duplication.